



**Office of the Attorney General
Paul G. Summers**

**Department of Commerce and Insurance
Commissioner Anne Pope**

NEWS RELEASE

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**CONSUMERS: WATCH YOUR MAIL FOR RESTITUTION INFORMATION
REGARDING BRIDGESTONE/FIRESTONE SETTLEMENT**

Tennessee Attorney General Paul G. Summers and David McCollum, Division of Consumer Affairs director, want to remind consumers there is important information being mailed to them regarding the Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc. restitution program. The information requiring timely consumer action concerns restitution established by the Attorneys General in a \$51.5 million settlement with Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc. announced in November, 2001.

“We want to make sure all consumers understand the need to take timely action in this matter,” Attorney General Paul Summers said. “We believe it is vital for anyone who feels they have been wrongly denied reimbursement to be afforded every opportunity available for reconsideration.”

Today, the first round of notices were sent to all consumers (about 30,000) who requested reimbursement under Bridgestone/Firestone’s Voluntary Safety Tire Recall Reimbursement Program or Customer Satisfaction Program. The notices include those who received a full denial of their refund request from Bridgestone/Firestone. Those consumers will receive a letter from the Attorneys General along with a reconsideration form. If consumers want a refund to be reconsidered, they must return the form with a

postmark no later than March 11, 2002. To be eligible, the form should be addressed to State Attorneys General Multistate Working Group - Attn: Bridgestone/Firestone Settlement, Post Office Box 5155, Des Plaines, IL 60019-9971. Consumers will also receive a list of contact information for any questions they may have about the settlement.

In late January, an estimated 100,000 additional notices will be sent to consumers who requested reimbursement and received a partial denial from Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc. Again, consumers will have 60 days to return the reconsideration forms to Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc. to be eligible for the restitution program.

Consumers who return the reconsideration form will have their denial reviewed by Bridgestone/Firestone under a credible evidence standard. Bridgestone/Firestone will either: (1) pay the request for a refund or (2) contact the consumer and let the consumer know the reason for the denial and that the consumer has right to send the denial to an independent arbitrator for review. The arbitration process is provided at no cost to consumers. A request for arbitration review must be requested within 45 days by returning the request for arbitration form.

Bridgestone/Firestone has estimated the restitution program will cost the company \$10 million. The settlement, however, requires Bridgestone/Firestone to complete the restitution program regardless of cost.